



SENATOR RUNNER'S WEEK IN REVIEW

A WEEKLY REVIEW THAT WILL KEEP YOU INFORMED AND UP-TO-DATE



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Overview of California's Infrastructure

Infrastructure traditionally has been defined as large capital works projects such as roads, dams and sewers. Over the past few years the definition has been expanded to include other public assets. Infrastructure is now often broken into two areas:

Physical Assets, or "brick and mortar infrastructure," are constructed capital projects and structures such as public buildings, school facilities, water supply systems, housing, roads and transportation systems. The definition is growing to include other systems that affect our economy and quality of life like medical/healthcare facilities and telecommunications/information infrastructure.

Natural Assets, or "resource infrastructure," provide the environmental resources an economy needs to operate such as energy and water. In addition to these forms of infrastructure, there is also a "human infrastructure," that includes our workforce that requires investment in education and training for the overall California economy.

There are four major types of Infrastructure used by California's 37 million residents:

Transportation – bridges, transit, airports, seaports, rail

Education Facilities – buildings for K-12 schools, colleges and universities

Water & Natural Resources – water, electricity, natural gas, parks and beaches

Public Facilities – fire and police stations, libraries, public hospitals, government buildings, courts, prisons.

Many infrastructure investments are usually one-time capital expenses, requiring voter approval for financing government-owned infrastructures. Additionally, state, county and city budgets provide funds to cover infrastructure operating and maintenance expenses like staff salaries and utility costs for facilities. Citizens of California play a major role in deciding the allocation of resources for different types of infrastructure.

News of the Week

[Governor Signs Community College Bills](#)

[Appeals Court Upholds California's Ban on Gay Marriages](#)

[Governor's Debate Scheduled on Saturday](#)

[Kindergarten Prep: Late Start to School](#)

[Air Board To Do Work on Global Warming](#)

[State Prison Crowding Emergency Declared](#)

[California's Charter Schools to Increase](#)

[Escondido Council Okays Illegal Immigration Ordinance](#)

Transportation

The state's transportation system is the engine that keeps our citizens and economy moving. An efficient transportation system delivers people to their jobs, raw materials to manufacturers, and products to market.

In supporting both the largest economy and the largest population of any state in the US, California has an extensive road system. Around 170,000 miles of roads serve the public and shipping and serve to connect major population centers together. Hundreds of air and sea ports allow citizens to travel overseas and other destinations difficult to reach by automobile. California spent \$22.4 billion in transportation investments in 2005-06.

Education

California's public education system serves more than 8.1 million students at over 9,500 K-12 and Higher Education facilities statewide. A growing and diverse population and the need for lifelong learning in today's economy have increased the demand for new and upgraded facilities.

According to the Department of Education, over one million of California's more than six million K-12 students are in classrooms over 25 years old. Slower growth in the K-12 caseload and other institutional changes have lessened the overall need for new facilities.

In 2006 the Office of Public School Construction projected a need of 32,000 new classrooms by 2010 (based on a classroom size of 25-27 students). In addition, they estimated that 45,000 classrooms would need to be modernized over the next five years.

Water

California is the largest user of water in the nation, due in part to its large population, extensive agricultural sector, and large industrial base.

California's water comes from many sources: precipitation, rivers, groundwater, and even from out of state through aqueducts (such as the Colorado River aqueduct) and water transfers. As the state's population and economy continue to grow, California will need to meet the need for water through sustainable processes that ensure efficient use of existing water resources. Only then will California be on the correct path of quenching the thirst of the third largest and most populous state in the nation.

Public Facilities

Public facilities are the places where government performs its most essential function—service to people. Public buildings provide the tools for the administration and delivery of services. Public buildings are centers of learning, gathering places, and work spaces for public employees and representatives. Within the walls of these buildings they teach, learn, heal, protect, administer justice, and make or oversee public policy.

Public facilities in California include:

- 8.5 million square feet of state-owned office space
- 16.6 million square feet of leased office space
- 5 mental health hospitals comprising over 4 million square feet of facilities

- 5 developmental centers comprising over 5 million square feet of facilities
- 2 public health laboratory facilities
- 451 court buildings

Funding

An investment in infrastructure is an investment in California's future. The state's schools, universities, transportation systems, water systems, public safety facilities, and natural resources are the framework for the individual and collective quality of life enjoyed by Californians. Without a strong framework, our economy will falter, and our quality of life will be at risk.

The way California's infrastructure projects are funded has changed since the 1960s. In the 1960's 42% of infrastructure revenues came from bonds. Today about 78% comes from bonds, in addition to about 1% of the state's General Fund.

Despite their importance, single expenditures on infrastructure during high times in the business cycle create impediments to meeting California's future needs. A lasting and dedicated infrastructure funding source is necessary. Existing revenue sources will not meet current and projected needs due to increasing costs for maintenance, repair, and new infrastructure development. As local sales taxes expire and other existing revenue sources – like gasoline taxes – erode, Californians will need to significantly increase and sustain infrastructure investments to prepare for future needs. It should be a critical goal of any infrastructure plan or project to:

- Maximize the return on investment for existing infrastructure
- Strive for maximum leverage of every state dollar spent on infrastructure project
- Use an integrated, strategic approach to infrastructure funding

Equity in Infrastructure Investment

Equity considerations in infrastructure occur along four dimensions: access (who gets what), funding (who pays), long-term impacts (who gains), and participation (who decides). Decisions about infrastructure impact everyone in the community and should be guided by principles designed to ensure that benefits and burdens are distributed fairly throughout the region. Having all of the public pay for infrastructure makes sense when the benefits are widely distributed as with education, libraries and parks and also when user fees are either hard to collect or felt to be unfair. Public concerns need to be addressed if California starts to fund infrastructure by imposing new user taxes and fees. The means for collecting revenues to support infrastructure improvements should be determined and applied in ways that are fair and not disproportionately burdensome to those with lower incomes.

Infrastructure decisions have widespread impact on housing, development, investment patterns, and quality of life and the outcomes of those decisions must be fair and beneficial to all.

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